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CHALLENGER

FREE

MASTHEAD

EDITOR AND ART DIRECTION
Nick Ferreira

CONTRIBUTORS
Chester Jones
Bob Scerbo
Sam Waller
Brian Tunney
Tyler Rembold
Mason Gray
Patrick Richert
Ryan Martin
Rob Dolecki
Carlos Santori
Peter Sutherland
Zach Gilbert

CONTACT
info@challengerbmxmag.com

Challenger BMX Magazine
P.O. Box 121166
Chicago, IL 60612
United States

773-542-3279

WEB
challengerbmxmag.com
@challengerbmxmag

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BMX for being sick
Extra special thanks to the Pup Stars squad. Thanks for packing envelopes with me.

I'm not anti-anything, I just wanna be free.

COVER PHOTO
Al Borelli by Ryan Martin
NEBB BABY

INTRO BUST

And we're back. Here for another year, I promise. We won't fold halfway through the year leaving you to wonder how your subscription money is getting spent. That's why we'll continue to print on newsprint and make small improvements (like adding another page) when it makes sense instead of losing all steam after printing one glossy mag.

This issue has been particularly fun to put together and has some cool stuff from all over and hopefully doesn't seem like a caricature of an "underground BMX magazine." One of my favorite parts about making this is I get to do pretty much whatever I want. Myself and the contributors can experiment and see what works and what doesn't. It feels particularly great to put Al Borelli from Massachusetts on the cover. Al fits the bill for a Challenger cover (and so doesn't Jordan Stump over to the right). See previous covers for why that might be. Hint: the title of the eighth studio album by Memphis rap group Three 6 Mafia is a good way to describe what it takes to make the cover.

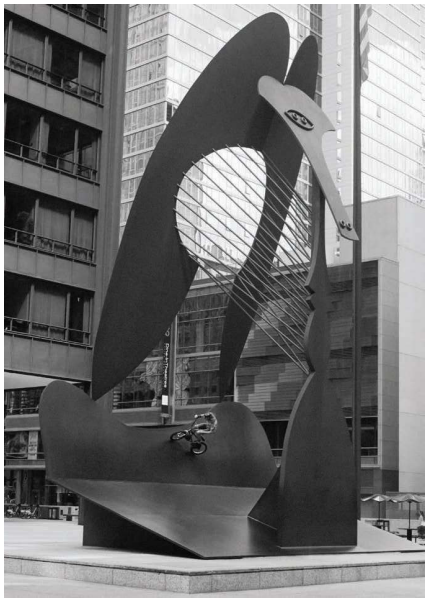
I got to write about the Picasso sculpture/wallride in downtown Chicago for the Spot Reference article. Mason Gray took some photos sitting on his bike or while riding his bike that are interspersed throughout (look for the #6 symbol). Chester Jones was on assignment in New Zealand covering the angles of Jed Mildon's quad backflip ramp for his Curvature Counsel column. Sam Waller talks about how goofy it sounds to describe riding BMX and Kohl Denney AKA kohlfromSD talked to me about BMX/motorbike stunts. Rob Dolecki was nice enough to answer some questions about his much beloved photo of Brian Foster at Catty Woods and there's some other stuff that is trickling in after I type this that I'm excited about but I don't know exactly what that stuff may be. Oh yeah, Bob Scerbo took a great photo of Chase Hawk and we got to print it big. Phew, see ya in June. Enjoy the beginning of spring! - Nick

SPOT REFERENCE: THE PICASSO

by Nick Ferreira

LET'S GIVE IT BACK NOW!!!
only living on have Fear is Fear itself
CHICAGO WELCOMES FEAR
A FEARFUL SOCIETY
Social Commentary on CHICAGO

clockwise from top
Signs and protesters by Robert W. Krueger courtesy Chicago Public Library
Alex Duleba by Patrick Richert
Unveiling, photographer unknown, courtesy University of Illinois Chicago



The Picasso sculpture, located in Chicago's Daley Plaza, is such a staple of street riding in Chicago, IL, it seemed almost too obvious to discuss for this column. It's a bank to slanted wall and it's even named for the artist who made it. Case closed, right? That's what I thought, but the plaza and the history of the sculpture made it seem like it deserved a column. Plus, it's one of the funnest spots in Chicago. I've seen the most serious of grown men leave their backpack on and take continuous laps at the wall-ride, smiling from ear to ear, yelling at you "to get in there, the security guard won't be out for another minute!"

The Picasso sculpture, which was unveiled in 1967, sits in Daley plaza. The plaza, which is adjacent to the main building, The Daley Center, also features a fountain, an eternal flame dedicated to those who served in the military, a gentleman named Farhad Khoiee-Abbasi known as "Chicago FBI sign guy" for holding various signs pointed at the FBI and FBI agents Monday-Friday, and from November-January the Christkindlmarket, a German Christmas market where you can get mulled wine served in a cute boot mug. The Daley in Daley plaza comes from Richard J. Daley, Chicago's former controversial mayor.

While officially titled *Chicago Picasso*, the sculpture pretty much universally known as THE Picasso, was gifted to the city by the artist. Picasso was apparently convinced to make the work based on a poem and other gifts sent by the architect William Hartmann, an architect that worked for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, one of the firms responsible for the Daley Center. It's impossible to know but maybe the world would be better if more deals were made via poems.

The sculpture itself was built by American Bridge Company, a division of U.S. Steel located in Michael Jackson's hometown of Gary, Indiana. The steel used, Cor-Ten Steel, is the same steel used in the building located on the premises, the Daley Center. It rusts over time, giving it that cool orange look seen in other outdoor steel sculptures (see: Richard Serra).

The thing with the Picasso sculpture, though, is that people hated it at first, and probably continue to. It was a too abstract and the idea (not proven) that Picasso simply mixed the image of an Afghan Hound dog and the image of a woman seemed a little too out there for Chicagoans. One Chicago Alderman, John Hoellen, even proposed sending it back and instead replacing it with a sculpture of Cubs player Ernie Banks.

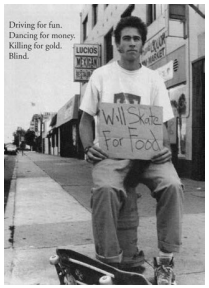
As previously mentioned, the spot itself is really just a bank to slanted wall and to get the full effect, it's best to haul ass at it. You might even consider going slow to get the feel but don't do it. It's just like any other bank to slanted wall you've ridden except you're not only riding a piece of art history, you're also riding a piece of Chicago's history. Plus it sounds really cool.

Picasso died in 1973, just six years after the unveiling of the mysterious sculpture he gifted to the city of Chicago. Its lines counter the hard-edged modernism of the plaza and building in a way that breathes some life into the expanse of marble and steel. The architectural firms responsible for the plaza SOM, C.F. Murphy, and Loebl Schlossman Bennett & Dart all continued to create a name for themselves. William Hartmann, the architect that helped persuade Picasso to design the sculpture for Chicago, continued working for the SOM firm until he retired in 1981.

IN THE DEEP END

by Brian Tunney

Not BMX, but live a little people. I had driven past this dinky little Mexican restaurant sign in Torrance a few times and always had deja vu, like I knew it from somewhere. Lo and behold, I did. The original Blind ad, with Jason Lee sitting on the same fire hydrant, hung in my bedroom as a teenager. This would've been around the time the original Blind team started filming for *Video Days*, and we know where things went from there. At the time, Spike Jonze was working for *Go: The Rider's Manual* in Torrance, shooting ad photos on the side, and I assume plotting the course of *Video Days*. As for Jason Lee, his section was burned into my brain because it kicked off with 20 seconds of vert riding and then went into crazy manual lines, all to the tune of Milk's 'Knife Song,' which featured a bunch of BMX magazine editors and a BMX pro on drums (RL Osborn). Yeah, you might say it was a convoluted little world back then. And I'm glad those boundaries were so murky.



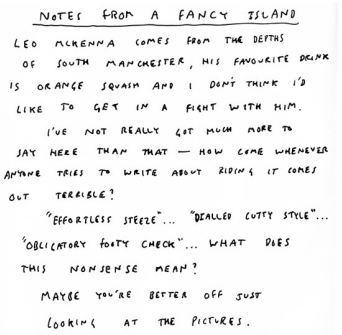
LEARN HOW TO HAVE FUN: EAT SHIT/DIE

by Anonymous

This one sounds awful right? I'm not gonna lie, I don't love it either. However, eating absolute shit is totally essential if you are tryna have fun out here. This is just facts homeboy. For serious.

Oh, you don't want to eat shit and/or die? Well this bmx thing probably isn't gonna work out for you. Maybe try Scrabble. Do some volunteer work. Go to the library, perhaps. Basically do anything that doesn't involve going fast, crashing, and getting completely clobbered by 30 lbs of chrome molybdenum.

PRO TIP: If you really want to eat shit and die, go extra fast, yank those bars back, and hope for the best. You can thank me later.


NOTES FROM A FANCY ISLAND

LEO MCKENNA COMES FROM THE DEPTHS OF SOUTH MANCHESTER, HIS FAVOURITE DRINK IS ORANGE SQUASH AND I DON'T THINK I'D LIKE TO GET IN A FIGHT WITH HIM.

I'VE NOT REALLY GOT MUCH MORE TO SAY HERE THAN THAT — HOW COME WHENEVER ANYONE TRIES TO WRITE ABOUT RIDING IT COMES OUT TERRIBLE?

"EFFORTLESS STEEZE"... "DEALER CUTEY STYLE"... "OBLIGATORY FORTY CHECK"... WHAT DOES THIS NONSENSE MEAN?

MAYBE YOU'RE BETTER OFF JUST LOOKING AT THE PICTURES.

KOHL DENNEY

Interview by Nick Ferreira photos by Zach Gilbert

I ran into you at Burnside last summer and you were crushing it there. But then I checked your out your instagram and was blown away by the stunts, especially the stuff in the front yard. What was first for you, BMX or motor bikes? Or was it at the same time?
First off, huge shout out to the Northwest bmx scene for the guaranteed good times. I started off Bmx'n.

What's up with the stunts? I know it's annoying to hear people ask "why" but, why stunts?
Creative expression, adrenaline, the challenge, the satisfaction, the FUN.

You're kind of picking up the torch from others in the past like Ken Hale, Colin Winkelmann, and Paul Fernandez. Who are your inspirations?
It's an honor to be mentioned alongside those guys. Each of which, have inspired me, but I also get inspired by random people too. Anyone that shows personality or thinks outside the box.

What else beyond BMX and motocross inspires you?
I guess I'm lucky, pretty much anything inspires me. Boredom, music, or anything that doesn't come easy. Like Lemmy says, "The chase is better than the catch."

I love the ramps! What's your thought process when building ramps and landings? Do you do any testing prior to takeoff?
For the ramps I start off with a general idea. Then I just start piecing it together one board, ladder, or cooler at a time. Usually if you stack enough crap together, you can jump anything.

This is the most obvious question but what do the neighbors say? It really brings a smile to my face to know you are doing a lot of this stuff in the middle of your neighborhood.
Well, you never know what the neighbors will tolerate until you subject them to it. But, I think they're stoked on it.

How did Metal Mulisha come about? I know they have a checkered history with BMX or maybe just one with the Troy McMurray MTV Sports & Music Festival incident.
Oh man the Incident sounds like a classic! Involving Nastazio, an old Mulisha member nobody likes, Troy McMurray and a UFC fighter. That's all I got.
Metal Mulisha came about from Larry Linkogle (owner) reaching out to me. He drove to my house the next day. Within 15 minutes of meeting we started playing thrash metal in my jam room.
We've been tight ever since. His walk the walk attitude really fires me up and Mulisha has been a positive thing for me.

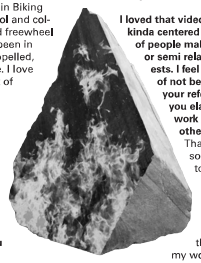
LIKE LEMMY SAYS, "THE CHASE IS BETTER THAN THE CATCH."

INTERVIEW: PETER SUTHERLAND

by Nick Ferreira. Artwork courtesy of Peter. Skate deck by World Industries.

Peter Sutherland is a skier, surfer, MTBer, and artist living in New York City. His work often takes the form of photographs with elements of sculpture. It's probably a cliche in the Instagram era to say that someone has a knack for the overlooked but Peter has a great way of looking at the world and the subcultures he inhabits. Whenever I see his work in person or pick up one of his books, I feel like it was made by one of my friends.

What's your involvement with cycling/bikes?
Low level BMX as a small kid then I skated, but I was Mountain Biking heavy through high school and college. Lots of single speed freewheel for the last 20 years I've been in NYC. I love being self propelled, not using gas all the time. I love the way I feel on any sort of board or on a bicycle.



Just from following your work I knew you were interested in cycling but never really saw much related to BMX. But then I think I saw photos you shot of Grady Corbitt at Posh and maybe a photo of Edwin DeLaRosa in NYC. How much do you follow BMX? And did you ever ride BMX?
I was excited about BMX when I was really young, we lived in Michigan on a dirt road. When we moved to a place with a paved road (Colorado) I started skating. But early issues of *BMX Plus!* and *BMX Action* magazines were super inspiring to me. I think the bails always seemed too gnarly for me on bikes and skate bails seemed more manageable.

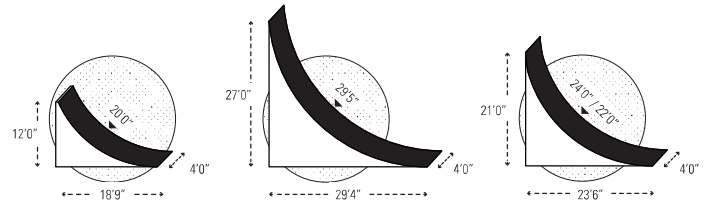
I loved that video you made with your bro kinda centered around a MTB trip. A lot of people make work that is inspired or semi related to their other interests. I feel like you do a good job of not being really obvious with your references/inspiration. Can you elaborate a little on making work that is inspired by your other interests?
Thanks. Yeah I think there is something about moving to NYC when I was still young and seeing art work in museums and galleries and then going back into the world and collecting images with that sensibility. Most of my work has an autobiographical angle, so I'm showing you the things that I am really excited about. Maybe it translates. Also none of us are really that good at MTBing so it's all about the atmospheric stuff.

Would you ever want to swap your life as a pro artist with mtber, skier/snowboarder hobbies and be a pro mtber, skier/snowboarder, with an art hobby?
I have friends that are pro or were pro. I think it's awesome but it's hard to grow older and hang on to it. I feel lucky with the direction my life has taken, so I guess I wouldn't trade. It's just as fun to do all of this stuff on a non competitive level. I always feel like I'm expressing my self on a board or riding a bike.

I've always thought that it would be really easy to compare the art world with the BMX world re: someone working professionally. Gallery representation is to sponsorship as solo show is to video part, etc. Have you ever thought about that connection? I've never been a pro bmxer or a pro artist so I could be completely wrong…
Yeah I think that is correct, there is something about representation, all it really is is someone else saying what you do is good. It's good to have that stuff but even better to just keep doing what ever it is you like. Sometimes all the galleries and stuff cloud up what you are trying to do. I've been on both sides where my art is worth nothing and I've sold stuff for a lot of money. Both are interesting. It's hard to hold on to the second one.

I've really enjoyed seeing your work mature and develop over the years. I love the sculptural elements and move from straight photography. What prompted that?
I still take photos and believe in the strength of images, but I also get bored with the limitations and the ways people tend to present photography. It's always about framing it and photographers being so precious about images. But when it's loosened up and you can add in sculpture and cut your photos in half and light them on fire it feels way more open.

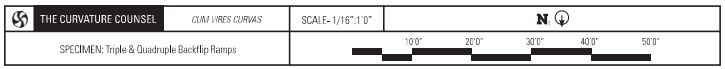
Favorite skate, BMX, snowboard, subculture graphic of all-time?
I think its the Mike Vallely barn yard board. It was a board I had and an early double kick type of board. A lot of the time it's not about the graphic but more about the time in your life when you see it. There's good graphics everywhere now but they don't sink in as deep as they did when I was 12 years old and trying to varial flip on flat.



TRIPLE Backflip Ramp - Taupo NZ / 2011
(Landed)
—
12ft High Lip
20ft Radius
65,6ft Roll-In
45ft Gap
13ft Step Up

QUADRUPLE Backflip Ramp - Franklin Farm NZ / 2015
(Attempt)
—
27ft High Lip !
29,5ft Radius
115ft Roll-In
45ft Gap
13ft Step Up

QUADRUPLE Backflip Ramp - Pastranaland USA / 2015
(Landed)
—
21ft High Lip
24ft - 22ft Compound Radius
65,6ft Roll-In
48ft Gap
No Step Up



THE CURVATURE COUNSEL: TRIPLE & QUAD BACKFLIP RAMPS

by Chester Jones

As one thing tends to lead to another, two turns itself into three and so fourth. Historically speaking, humans defy odds at all costs and sometimes the bicycle serves as a simple tool for doing so. A pioneer pushing the proverbial envelope four times over, backflip brave Jed Mildon exercised his high proficiency in airtime crowning four whole backflips in one jump.

A warrior of wicked ways, the kiwi whipped up a whirlwind of wood and steel structures second-to-none-other on his quest for the quadruple backflip. These very ramps consisted of colossal curvatures compounded with complex mightiness and magnitude. Raising the immeasurable stakes higher, ramps first made for motors were modified with steeper extensions multiplied by 100-foot-tall roll-ins that in some cases yielded speeds close to terminal velocity for a BMX wheel clocking in at 40 miles-per-hour towards the impending catapults of either tragedy or triumph.

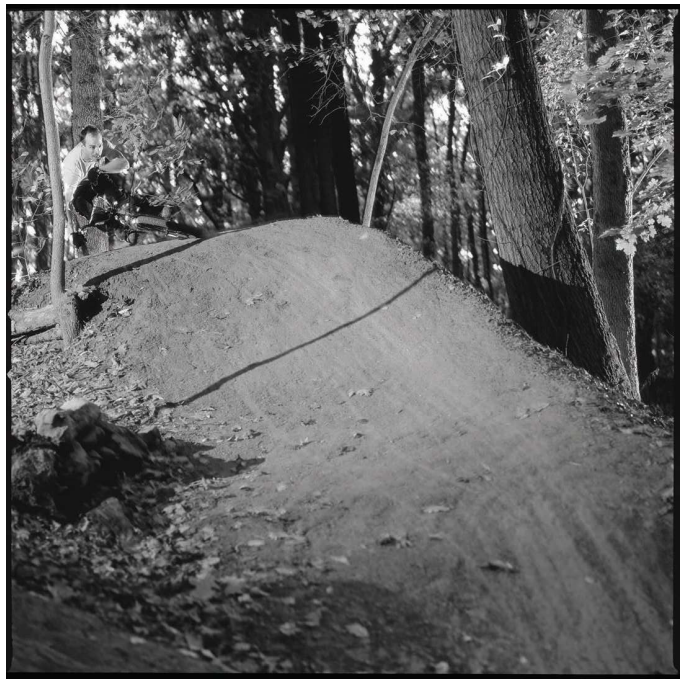
The pursuit of the right pop, thunk and sheering huck off the lip allowed for more than three seconds of airtime and a whole lot of float propelling this grand schematic of progression, mechanics, and athleticism into the books. A science project of psych delineating g-forces and acceleration into four pull back as fuck flips baffling all pad gladiators parallel-ish. The way willed the mental fundamental flow state necessary for such an operation and unequivocally has yet to be seen again. The quad limit still challenges scientists and physicists alike—and, well, our money is on Mr. Mildon to prove em wrong.

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Chase Hawk by Bob Scerbo

THE BRIAN FOSTER BUBBA SCRUB PHOTO

by Nick Ferreira

This photo was shot for Brian Foster's interview in the March 2008 issue of *Ride* UK. BF's style is timeless. What were your goals while photographing him for the interview?
The main goal was to show BF in his favorite riding environment, which is his local concrete and dirt. Since he lives about an hour and a half away from me, it wasn't difficult to meet up with him at FDR and a few trails spots in the region, most notably Posh and Catty. Some of the photos I shot were just byproducts of random riding days. Capturing the classic BF style everyone knows and loves was merely a matter of pushing a shutter button.



I was listening to the BMX in Our Blood podcast with Issac McCrea and he said something along the lines of "you never have a picture of someone doing a triple tailwhip on their wall." Everyone says that they love "style" and "simplicity" but it seems like the opposite is pushed. It's almost like even though everyone knows what they really want, they do what they think other people like. Why do you think that is?
Groundchuck's interview is a great listen. His perspective on riding rules; he makes a good point. For better or worse, I think it comes down to the traditional media/industry mold usually putting trick progression on the highest pedestal over anything else in recent years, especially in terms of video. I obviously feel trick progression should have merit, especially when it's a building block for tomorrow's riding. But I also think the exploits of the talented and gifted few who make everything from smith grinds to tabletops look better than everyone else, as well as ever-refining techniques on how something is ridden are other forms of progression that can hold just as much weight. Just because it's an NBD or "world's first" doesn't necessarily mean it's the most valuable. With all the open-ended media platforms and DIY print/videos coming out in recent years, there are plenty of media sources emphasizing riders who choose style, simplicity, and refinement of technique on well-chosen terrain over anything else - if you look for it.

How much input did BF have on the photos for this interview? Did he have certain things he wanted to photograph.
BF has always been the consummate pro, so he definitely had some specific ideas for what he wanted to shoot. Some of the photos used were those spontaneous "That looked badass• would you be into doing that again?" moments and others, like this and the FDR step-down transfer were Brian's idea.

This is an unrelated question but I'm curious to hear your opinion. BMXers seem to be hung up on certain formats being "better" even if the final product is off, i.e. a 35mm photograph scanned poorly with dust all over it is "better" then an iPhone photo, a bad photo in print is better than a good photo on the web, etc. What's your take on that?
Basing your taste more on format over subject matter/ quality has always seemed kind of goofy to me. I have my personal favorite formats when taking photos, but probably all of my most favorite BMX photos that I've ever seen weren't shot in those. I get the whole "art" thing, and I'm a fan of any printed matter, but if it's a bad photo (however someone defines it) in print, it's still a bad photo, no matter what form it's in.

People love this photo. Did you know it was going to be such a hit?
Honestly, I don't think I ever know if a photo going to be a hit or not. There have been multiple photos that I thought would be well-received, but never went past being scanned or dumped on a hard drive (I'm slacking on all that Instagram material). At the time, I did imagine this one might be something cool due to the awesome combo of BF, his style, and a basic roller. But I would have never guessed it was going to be the most lauded trails photo that I've shot.

I didn't know this was a square format photo. It was cropped to a landscape image for its final product. I think the final product printed in *Ride* UK looked great but how did you feel about it? And on that note, did you ever have any particularly bad crop jobs from designers?
I don't have access to that issue at the moment, so I forget exactly how it was cropped. Chris Noble was always dialed at his *Ride* UK layouts and never cropped stuff weird, so I don't ever remember seeing a photo butchered by him. Yeah, I've seen some really cringe-worthy cropping of my photos; it was probably by designers who knew little to nothing about riding. But if the pay rate is good enough, anyone can do as much shitty cropping as they like to my photos without a word from me (laughter).

Ryan Kramer. Denver, CO by Tyler Rembold

DUT'S COMP DVD REVIEW

by Tyler Rembold

The Dut's Comp video is a snapshot of the Denver area street riding scene over the last few years. Most of the video is filmed throughout Colorado, and the rest is from trips to surrounding states and cities.

The video starts off with a minimal-bullshit, minimal B-roll intro section. The intro includes a healthy mix of hits and misses, and it warms things up and sets the tone for the rest of the video.

The first full section belongs to Ben Linschoten. Ben is an animal on a bike. Ben's section might be one of the most genuine sections in the whole video, because it's an accurate representation of how Ben rides on the daily. Ben can blast non-obstacles like quarterpipes and has enough style to not need tricks or peculiar setups to hold anyone's interest. That said, Ben's riding usually takes the path of most resistance. Throughout his whole section, he wrangles finesse out of non-spots where simply riding away alive would be considered acceptable and kosher execution. Ben's part feels full and complete, and has a nice cadence leading up to a definitive (and frankly, reckless and self-loathing) ending.

After Ben's part Danimal ushers in a mix section with tasteful, timeless, quadripeg setup moves. This whole section moves at a healthy pace and no clip feels out of place or unwarranted despite there being mad heads in there. Paul Smith's clips make riding look as fun as it actually is. Rob DiQuattro reminds anyone that's forgot (if you did, you're slipping) that he will still grind the gnarliest rails. Scott Marceau comes through with tasteful grind combos. Dallas Martinez and Adam Accardi have amazing bike control. The mix section plays quickly, wraps up with another heavy clip, and reinforces the rhythm and vibe of the video as a whole.

The next part is Dustin Arp's. Dut is arguably (not really though) the scene-dad of Denver. While most rider/filmer combos struggle to exceed at both simultaneously, this is clearly not a struggle for Dut. He has a childlike enthusiasm for all things BMX, and the taste and fearlessness of an old head that has seen all the ins and outs of the game. Dustin flexes his credibility by pushing himself (and street riding as a whole) throughout his whole section. Dut's part has enough X-up grinds and 60-40's to warm the heart of any God-fearing, peg-wielding, American working man. This section would be savage in isolation, but within the context of the rest of the video (not to mention Dut's previous projects) this part is truly inspirational.

Another mix section starts bumping after the air thaws out from Dut's ender. Kenjoe sets the pace for the last mix section with loose and fearless riding. Ross Albreski makes tailwhips look fun and easy. Danny Camacho has a poppy, young swag that's easy on the eyes. Chris Cutright has a handful of crazy handrail clips that make it hard to contain your expletive of choice. Mario Carrasco also has some wild and solid clips documented here. Like the first mix, this one is full of entertaining riding from some names you've heard before and some that you've probably been sleeping on.

Paco Quintana's holds down the final section. His part starts out raw and timelessly, and the first clip is indicative of Pac's benign motivation to push himself. Like Ben, Paco has the talent and finesse to be a jibby/flowy rider (ain't nothing wrong with that); but chose instead to film a full couple minutes of edgework for his video part. Pac's part is really well rounded. While a lot of his section is comprised of new-school tricks that I'm not sure have been replicated yet; big, timeless, & scary shit is liberally dumped throughout. As any last section should be, this one is engaging all the way through with increasing intensity until there's nothing left but the credits.

The video wraps up after about 22 minutes, and makes you want to ride after (or pop it back in if you're still waiting on your boys to meet up). The music in the video (Beastie Boys, James Brown, Busta, Funkadelic, Outkast) is upbeat yet laid back which gives the video an honest, genuine feel while letting the clips tell the story. I highly recommend that anyone with a slight interest or appreciation for street riding swoop up the video for his/her collection.

THE ADVENTURES OF

By Carlos Santori

MG #4

MG Photo Key
#1Jordan Stump
#2 Owen
#3 Chris Silva
#4 Doggo

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